



Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative Early Care & Education Work Group

Minutes Tuesday, June 15, 2004 - 10:00 a.m. - Victory Building, Suite 450

Members Present: Donna Alliston, Judy Clay, Dorothea Davis, Geania Dickey, David Griffin, Joanna Grymes, Thelma Jasper, Kathy Mackay, Vicki Mathews, Martha Reeder, Sandra Reifeiss, Tonya Russell, Terrie Senteney-Baker, Vicki Shelby, Vicki Stearns, Kathy Stegall, Ratha Turpin
(Refer to attached list for agency affiliation and contact information.)

Agenda Item #1 - Welcome and Introductions - Sandra Reifeiss and Vicki Shelby, co-chairs of the work group, introduced themselves and welcomed members who were present. Each person introduced themselves, naming their agency of affiliation. Some members of the group were not able to be present for the first meeting, but plan to attend on June 30.

Agenda Item #2 - Introduction to the AECCS - Martha Reeder

Discussion: Martha Reeder presented a PowerPoint presentation that gave an overview of the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative. She stressed the importance of school readiness as a unifying factor for planning in all groups.

Timelines for work in the intermediate time between now and the joint meeting on August 31 were shared. Each group will be developing a logic model to show priority long-term outcomes that they wish to accomplish. A draft of the logic model that the Social-Emotional Health Work Group is working on was shared as an example of the work ahead.

Timelines for final formulation of an implementation plan were shared.

Results: Members of the group were asked to study the Arkansas School Readiness Indicators Initiative publication, *Getting Ready For School*, and determine which indicators that have already been identified and tracked that might be appropriate for this work group to "own." Hard copies of the publication were not available, but it can be viewed at <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/schoolreadiness.html> More copies are being printed, and will soon be available to all work group members.

Dr. Deborah Gangluff will consult with the group at the next meeting (June 30), to facilitate the development of the group's logic model. Eva Carter, Region VI State Technical Assistance Specialist, will also help facilitate the next meeting, and will consult with this work group throughout the process. In preparation for the August 31 joint meeting, this meeting will be devoted to identifying priority long-term outcomes.

A draft of the implementation plan is scheduled to be completed by April of 2005, with the final plan and completed logic model completed by July of 2005.

(Agenda Item #2, cont.)

Tasks: Group members should study *Getting Ready For School* in order to see what might pertain specifically to the Early Care & Education Work Group effort. Members are asked to identify other indicators of importance, to begin to consider priorities for long-term outcomes, and to study the draft logic model from the Social-Emotional Health Work Group to prepare for the logic model session at the next meeting. In addition, work group members are invited to visit the web link on the DHS/DCCECE web site to the AECCS Initiative in order to see what other groups are doing. The link is www.arkansas.gov/childcare/aeccs.html.

Agenda Item #3: What is our Role - Work Group Brainstorming

Discussion: Co-chairs led the group in a discussion of what services are currently available for children and families in Arkansas, ages birth to five. They asked for input concerning gaps and unaddressed needs.

Kathy Stegall pointed out that the state has a trust fund to encourage businesses and corporations to support quality child care.

Work group members commented that legislators must be reached with the early childhood message on a continuing basis.

Result: Members replied that many services exist, but quality early care and education should:

- serve all socio-economic levels
- be readily accessible to all children and families
- address English Language Learners' needs
- be provided for children with disabilities
- address the need for infant/toddler care
- be linked to community resources (schools of 21st Century good model)
- be supported by adequate state policies
- be more readily available because of linkage to appropriate licensure policies

Work group members discussed ways to encourage corporate involvement and address the liability issues that businesses fear. Some ideas were to explore the area of contacting large corporations and universities. Another resource that may be able to link our efforts in Arkansas to national efforts is *Corporate Voices for Working Families*, a non-partisan, non-profit corporate membership organization created to bring the private sector voice into the public dialogue on issues affecting working families. This organization already has partnerships with corporations nationally, some who operate in Arkansas. The web site for *Corporate Voices* is <http://www.cvworkingfamilies.org/>.

Vicki Stearns reported that a campaign to educate legislators is underway. The campaign intends to identify individual indicators, and provide weekly information and updates connected with indicators.

<p>(Agenda Item #3, cont.)</p> <p>It was agreed that there should be some definition of "All" in the "all children and families."</p> <p>The role of parents in the demand/supply issue of quality care is very important. Ways of addressing this part of the equation were discussed.</p>	<p>The group must be able to identify what care is available geographically (look at county by county information)</p> <p>In order to reach Parents, some suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued education of parents about the importance of quality is important (public campaign)• Some type of statewide endorsement of quality could encourage parents to demand it• Possible linkage of parental involvement as a requirement in funded programs• General education of parents concerning child development issues continues to be important• Develop a website for parents with links to all types of information• Utilize parent centers that have been mandated in all school districts• Possibly create a process of mailing information to new parents after birth of a child (example: <i>The Pelican</i> out of Louisiana)
<p>Tasks: Members should study materials that are available regarding these issues, and bring resources and ideas to share at the next meeting.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item #4: Review Membership and Identify Possible New Members</p>	
<p>Discussion: Group members brainstormed concerning who was "missing" in this group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kathy Stegall will contact Jo Battle as a rep. for Family Child Care Homes, and a rep for immunization/maternal child care• Health Dept. representation (?)

<p>(Agenda Item #4, cont.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• David Griffin will contact for-profit provider• Dorothea Davis suggested that reps. from all geographic regions be contacted (everyone should access their own personal networks to establish these contacts)• Head Start and/or Early Intervention (Sandra Reifeiss will contact)• Geania Dickey will contact someone from quality initiative project
<p>Tasks: Above-named individuals will follow up with appropriate contacts.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item #5: Next meeting - The date for the next meeting of the work group is set for Wednesday, June 30, 2004. This will be a day long meeting from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.(lunch provided). It will be held at Calvary Church, Little Rock, in the Fireside Room of the Family Life Center. A map to the location will be attached. New construction will allow for more convenient parking in the lot adjacent to Cantrell Road between Pierce and Fillmore streets.</p>	